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The table in the upper part of the *maq'ad* was moved away first, and dancing continued as before in the space provided. In moments when there was no dancing, solo songs were sung by one or another sitting around the circle. A complete silence fell over the crowd while the *shbiini* sang many verses in sonorous Classical Arabic of the tragic epic of Qays and Layla, whose plot, though set among Bedawin of the Umayyad period, bears striking resemblance to that of the story of Romeo and Juliet. During the recitation, familiar to all, the peoples' faces seemed thoughtful and reflective, and there was applause when the song was finished. Usually there was no applause after the dances during which everyone was clapping in time anyway.

The couple[1] subsequently took up residence in the groom's own house. Neolocal residence is not uncommon at the present time, and it appears to be preferred by most young couples.

This account requires comment at a number of points.

1. In contrast to funerals, weddings are attended only by those who are invited. In this case the number of those invited by the groom was said to be limited because it was his second marriage, and because two large families happened to be in mourning, hence it was not fitting for their members to attend. Weddings are forbidden outright during the major part of Lent. There is a general sense of the incompatibility of happy and sad events or periods, and these rules and practices have the purpose of avoiding conflicts in emotions.

2. Feghali (1925, pp. 296–97) writes in some detail of what he calls a mock battle, of a verbal sort, which takes place in Maronite mountain villages when the groom's party approaches the bride's house. The incident reported above might not deserve to be called a verbal "mock battle" at all, but there was a definite sense of the groom's party being stopped for a time before it was allowed to approach and enter the house.

3. Writing of marriage practices in a Palestinian Muslim village, Granqvist (1935, p. 40) says that since they are losing a daughter, the bride's family do not rejoice at the wedding, and the bride herself is supposed to behave in a sad and subdued manner during the ceremony and must weep before leaving her father's house (*ibid.* p. 65). The same concept appears to be held by Lebanese Christians, and the behavior of the bride was undoubtedly largely conventional. The conventional aspect of this matter would explain the general lack of concern for the bride's tears. In this connection it should be mentioned that, like the European Mediterranean peoples, the Lebanese see no reason to suppress the expression of strong emotions in public. In fact, they interpret the inexpressiveness of North Europeans and their American cousins as evidence of either heartlessness or "deepness." By the same token, women in labor are free to scream loudly even when they are not actually suffering acute pain.

4. In the Middle East generally, the chief traditional solo woman's dance is some variation of what is commonly known as the "belly dance," the basic move-

1 - [A newly married couple of the village -- Analyst]

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family by giving birth to children" (1935, p. 100). This impression, if valid, may be instructively contrasted with the opinions of a young married woman of Munṣif who, although she put the *maḥiily* over the door and performed other traditional acts at her wedding, said that she thought such customs were ridiculous. She had conformed only on the insistence of others, apparently, and she seemed frankly contemptuous of those who took such things seriously.

6. The rapt, almost respectful, attention which was paid to the recitation of the Classical Arabic poem was significant behavior—not so much in regard to the wedding itself, but to the values which are attached to Classical Arabic, a matter which is discussed elsewhere in this work.

FUNERALS

General evidence indicates that in Munṣif the younger generation is more willing to practice innovations than the older, and less prone to cling to the old. And it is true in Munṣif as it is elsewhere that the wedding is a rite which evokes, largely in the younger people, hopeful thoughts about the future. On the other hand, the funeral evokes, mostly in older people, wistful thoughts of the past. If these surmises are founded in fact, they would help to explain why it is that attitudinal and formal changes are quite evident in the rite of marriage; and why the funeral, dominated ordinarily by older people, appears to maintain its old forms and significance. Furthermore, to a greater degree than the wedding, the Lebanese village funeral always has been, and still is, more than a rite of passage. It is also a rite of intensification which serves as a focus for the solidarity of the entire village, and, to some extent, the district. It is of great significance that the vigor of this second function of the funeral appears to persist unabated among the younger people as well as the older.

One funeral service was attended during the period of study. It took place in the afternoon, somewhat more than twenty-four hours after the death had occurred. The deceased was an elderly widow who had very few close relatives. For these reasons, someone said, "There will not be many people there."

The body was immediately taken care of by neighboring women. They laid it out in the family house and kept vigil over it until the time of the service. During the evening before the service, a large number of women paid their respects at the house, and at least twenty men at a time gathered solemnly in a neighboring house owned by a cousin of the deceased's late husband. They sat in a large circle in the *maq'ad*, conversing very quietly.

On the day of the funeral, the priest was in attendance at the house, making arrangements during the morning. At about two thirty the men, certainly about fifty of them, gathered at one house while the women were with the body. At about three the men went outside and gathered in groups outside the house of the deceased. There was considerable shaking of hands with men from other Qurni villages. Within the deceased's house there was some wailing.